United Nations S/2008/777

Security Council

Distr.: General
22 December 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 10 December 2008 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 3 December 2007 (S/2007/701), in which the President of the Security Council informed me that members of the Council had taken note of my recommendation to extend the mandate of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) for an additional year, until 31 December 2008.

I wish to inform the members of the Security Council that during 2008, UNOGBIS continued to support national efforts to stabilize the country, focusing in particular on efforts to promote peacebuilding and national reconciliation. To that end, my Representative worked in close consultation with the Government of Guinea-Bissau and other national stakeholders, as well as with regional and international partners, to help resolve various political and security crises, including, in particular, the challenges that followed the dissolution of the National Assembly and the collapse of the Government of the Prime Minister, Martinho Dafa Cabi, in July, the attempted coup and plot to assassinate the President, João Bernardo Vieira, in August, and the recent armed attack on the President's official residence in Bissau. UNOGBIS also cooperated with national authorities in addressing the growing threat of drug trafficking and organized crime.

Activities leading up to the holding of the successful legislative elections on 16 November 2008 included resource mobilization, civic education and the strengthening of the capacities of women's groups. UNOGBIS coordinated the work of international electoral observers and continued to play a lead role in coordinating the country's engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission.

A United Nations Development Programme-financed census of the country's armed forces, carried out in March 2008, was a milestone in the security sector reform process. On 20 August 2008, 30 senior military officers had been transferred from active service to reserve status at a ceremony marking the start of the security sector reform programme. UNOGBIS facilitated an inter-agency security sector reform assessment mission in October, aimed at proposing a United Nations integrated action plan to support the implementation of the security sector reform programme.

Throughout 2008, the Government of Guinea-Bissau continued its collaboration with international financial institutions to improve the fragile situation of the country's public finances and to enable Guinea-Bissau to benefit from debt relief. It also made efforts to put in place the necessary reforms, supported by

08-67579 (E) 080109

UNOGBIS and other partners, for economic stabilization. However, repetitive political and security disruptions have complicated efforts to improve the country's social and economic indicators.

On 21 November 2008, the Government of Guinea-Bissau requested the extension of the mandate of UNOGBIS for another year, so that the Office could continue to assist national efforts to consolidate peace in the country. I would therefore like to recommend that the mandate of UNOGBIS be extended for an additional year, until 31 December 2009, to allow the Office to continue providing support to the Government of Guinea-Bissau.

Accordingly, the mandate of UNOGBIS for 2009 would focus on: (a) assisting the Peacebuilding Commission in its multidimensional engagement with Guinea-Bissau; (b) strengthening the capacities of national institutions, including law enforcement and criminal justice systems, in order to maintain constitutional order; (c) supporting an all-inclusive national reconciliation and political dialogue process as an institutionalized peace consolidation framework; (d) supporting and facilitating the implementation of security sector reform; (e) extending cooperation to national authorities in their efforts to combat drug trafficking and organized crime; (f) assisting with the promotion and institutionalization of respect for the rule of law and human rights; (g) mainstreaming a gender perspective into peacebuilding, in line with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); (h) facilitating efforts to curb the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and contributing to the collection of small arms and light weapons held illicitly; and (i) enhancing cooperation with the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the European Union and other partners in efforts to contribute to the stabilization of Guinea-Bissau.

Furthermore, in reference to my letter dated 28 November 2007 (S/2007/700), in which I indicated my intention to submit to the Security Council, following the holding of credible and transparent legislative elections in 2008, concrete recommendations on transforming the current UNOGBIS into an integrated mission, I have the honour to inform you that I plan to deploy a technical assessment mission to Guinea-Bissau in the first quarter of 2009 to consult with the Government and the United Nations Country Team on integration-related strategies. Following the mission, I would submit recommendations to the Council for action in that respect.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

United Nations S/2008/778

Security Council

Distr.: General
22 December 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 22 December 2008 from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 10 December 2008 (S/2008/777) concerning your proposal that the current mandate of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), which expires on 31 December 2008, be revised and extended, has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

The members of the Security Council take note of the information and proposal contained in your letter and have decided that the mandate of UNOGBIS should be extended until 30 June 2009. The members of the Council also acknowledge the need to establish an integrated United Nations Office in Guinea-Bissau, as recommended in the statement made by the President of the Council on 15 October 2008 (S/PRST/2008/37) and look forward to your recommendations in this regard, which they would appreciate receiving by 15 June 2009.

(*Signed*) Neven **Jurica**
President of the Security Council

08-67585 (E) 080109

United Nations S/2008/779

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 December 2008

Original: English

China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General of 28 November 2008 (S/2008/744) on the United Nations operation in Cyprus,

Noting that the Government of Cyprus is agreed that in view of the prevailing conditions on the island it is necessary to keep the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) beyond 15 December 2008,

Echoing the Secretary-General's firm belief that the responsibility for finding a solution lies first and foremost with the Cypriots themselves, *stressing* that there now exists an unprecedented opportunity to make decisive progress, and *reaffirming* the primary role of the United Nations in assisting the parties to bring the Cyprus conflict and division of the island to a comprehensive and durable settlement,

Welcoming the launch of fully fledged negotiations on 3 September 2008, the progress made so far, and the leaders' joint statements,

Emphasizing the importance of all parties engaging fully, flexibly and constructively in those negotiations, in order to make decisive progress towards a comprehensive settlement based on a bicommunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions,

Encouraging continued momentum in negotiations and the maintenance of goodwill and trust, *looking forward* to substantive progress and the full exploitation of the current opportunity, *commending* the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders for the political leadership they have shown so far, and *welcoming* the intention of the Secretary-General to keep the Council informed of further development and progress,

Welcoming the announcement of confidence-building measures and the cancellation of military exercises, and *looking forward* to the implementation of these measures and agreement on and implementation of further steps to build trust between the communities,

Reaffirming the importance of continued crossings of the Green Line by Cypriots, *reiterating* its welcome for the opening of the Ledra Street crossing, *encouraging* the opening by mutual agreement of other crossing points, and *noting*

08-64538 (E) 121208

in this context the commitment in the leaders' joint statements to pursue the opening of the Limnitis/**Yeşilirmak** crossing point,

Convinced of the many important benefits for all Cypriots that would flow from a comprehensive and durable Cyprus settlement, and *encouraging* both sides clearly to explain these benefits, as well as the need for flexibility in order to secure them, to both communities well in advance of any eventual referenda,

Highlighting the supportive role the international community will continue to play in helping the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders to exploit fully the current opportunity,

Taking note of the assessment of the Secretary-General that the security situation on the island and along the Green Line remains generally stable, *welcoming* the decrease in the overall number of incidents involving the two sides and *urging* both sides to avoid any action, including restrictions on UNFICYP's movements, which could lead to an increase in tension, undermine the good progress achieved so far, or damage the goodwill on the island,

Recalling the Secretary-General's firm belief that the situation in the buffer zone would be improved if both sides accepted the 1989 aide-memoire used by the United Nations,

Welcoming the progress made in proceeding with demining activities, *echoing* the Secretary's General's call for the remaining minefields to be cleared, and *noting with concern* that funding is urgently required by the Mine Action Centre beyond 2008 to allow this work to continue beyond that period,

Welcoming the progress and continuation of the important activities of the Committee on Missing Persons, and *trusting* that this process will promote reconciliation between the communities,

Agreeing that an active and flourishing civil society is essential to the political process, *welcoming* all efforts to promote bicommunal contacts and events including, inter alia, on the part of all United Nations bodies on the island, and *urging* the two sides to promote the active engagement of civil society and the encouragement of cooperation between economic and commercial bodies and to remove all obstacles to such contacts,

Reaffirming the importance of the Secretary-General continuing to keep the operations of UNFICYP under close review while continuing to take into account developments on the ground and the views of the parties, and reverting to the Council with recommendations as appropriate for further adjustments to UNFICYP's mandate, force levels and concept of operation as soon as warranted,

Welcoming the appointment of Alexander Downer as the Secretary-General's Special Adviser with a mandate to assist the parties in the conduct of fully fledged negotiations aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement,

Echoing also the Secretary-General's gratitude to the Government of Cyprus and the Government of Greece for their voluntary contributions to the funding of UNFICYP, and his request for further voluntary contributions from other countries and organizations,

Welcoming and encouraging efforts by the United Nations to sensitize peacekeeping personnel in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases in all its peacekeeping operations,

1. *Welcomes* the analysis of developments on the ground over the last six months in the Secretary-General's report, in accordance with his mandate;

2. *Welcomes also* the launch of fully fledged negotiations on 3 September 2008, and the prospect of a comprehensive and durable settlement that this has created;

3. *Urges* full exploitation of this opportunity, including by intensifying the momentum of negotiations, preserving the current atmosphere of trust and goodwill, and engaging in the process in a constructive and open manner;

4. *Welcomes* the announcement on confidence-building measures and the cancellation of military exercises, and *looks forward* to these measures being fully implemented as well as to agreement on further such steps, including the possible opening of other crossing points, as mentioned in the leaders' joint statements;

5. *Reaffirms* all its relevant resolutions on Cyprus, in particular resolution 1251 (1999) of 29 June 1999 and subsequent resolutions;

6. *Expresses its full support* for UNFICYP and *decides* to extend its mandate for a further period ending 15 June 2009;

7. *Calls on* both sides to continue to engage, as a matter of urgency and while respecting UNFICYP's mandate, in consultations with UNFICYP on the demarcation of the buffer zone, and on the United Nations 1989 aide-memoire, with a view to reaching early agreement on outstanding issues;

8. *Calls on* the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkish forces to restore in Strovilia the military status quo which existed there prior to 30 June 2000;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on implementation of this resolution by 1 June 2009 and to keep the Security Council updated on events as necessary;

10. *Welcomes* the efforts being undertaken by UNFICYP to implement the Secretary-General's zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, *requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and *urges* troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action including the conduct of predeployment awareness training, and to take disciplinary action and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel;

11. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

United Nations S/2008/780

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 December 2008

Original: English

Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Taking note of the letter to the President of the Council from the Secretary-General dated 5 December 2008, attaching the letter to him from the President of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia dated 26 November 2008 (S/2008/767),

Recalling its resolution 1800 (2008) of 20 February 2008, which permitted the total number of ad litem Judges appointed at any one time to the Chambers of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia ("International Tribunal") to be increased to sixteen until 31 December 2008,

Noting that the International Tribunal currently has a total of 14 ad litem Judges assigned to cases; that three of them are assigned in a case where the judgment delivery is expected by 12 February 2009, and that the appointment of a further ad litem judge to another case expected to commence on 15 December 2008 would take the total number of ad litem Judge to fifteen until 12 February 2009,

Recalling that resolution 1503 (2003) of 28 August 2003 called upon the International Tribunal to take all possible measures to complete investigations by the end of 2004, to complete all trial activities at first instance by the end of 2008, and to complete all work in 2010, and that resolution 1534 (2004) of 26 March 2004 emphasized the importance of fully implementing the International Tribunal's completion strategy,

Convinced of the advisability of extending this exceptional authorization granted to the Secretary-General in resolution 1800 (2008) as a temporary measure to enable the International Tribunal to complete and conduct additional trials as soon as possible in order to meet its completion strategy,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

Decides that the Secretary-General may appoint, within existing resources, additional ad litem Judges upon request of the President of the International Tribunal in order to complete existing trials or conduct additional trials, notwithstanding that the total number of ad litem Judges appointed to the Chambers will from time to time temporarily exceed the maximum of twelve provided for in article 12 (1) of the Statute of the International Tribunal, to a maximum of sixteen at any one time, returning to a maximum of twelve by 28 February 2009,

Decides to remain seized of the matter.

08-64845 (E) 121208

United Nations S/2008/781

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 December 2008

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 1828 (2008), by which the Council requested me to report every 60 days after the adoption of the resolution on developments on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the political process, the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur, and all parties' compliance with their international obligations. The report covers the months of October and November 2008.

II. Developments relating to UNAMID

2. As at 30 November, the total strength of UNAMID uniformed personnel stood at 12,482, including 9,941 military personnel (9,367 troops, 353 staff officers, 161 military observers and 60 liaison officers), and 2,541 police personnel (2,111 police advisers and three formed police units totalling 430 personnel).

3. The number of civilian personnel stood at 2,962, or 53 per cent of full capacity, consisting of 770 international staff, 1,933 national staff and 259 United Nations Volunteers (UNVs). In addition, 259 personnel are under recruitment (93 international, 78 national and 88 UNVs). It has been difficult to attract and retain staff because of the security situation and harsh living and working conditions. Since 1 January 2008, 58 staff members departed UNAMID owing to resignations, reassignments and end of appointments, and 98 selected candidates rejected offers from UNAMID after completing recruitment requirements.

III. Deployment of UNAMID

4. During the reporting period, a total of 1,363 military and police personnel arrived in Darfur. In mid-October, 325 members of the main body of the Bangladeshi multi-role logistics unit arrived in Nyala. In mid-November, 148 members of the Egyptian transport unit also arrived in Nyala, providing a significant boost to the logistic capability of the force. In Northern Darfur, 490 personnel of the main body of the first Egyptian battalion were deployed to Um Kadada in late November. The balance of 174 members of the Egyptian battalion is

08-64080 (E) 161208

expected to deploy in January 2009 once further engineering work in Um Kadada is completed by the Egyptian Engineering Unit based in El Fasher.

5. Two formed police units, consisting of 140 personnel from Nepal and 140 personnel from Indonesia, arrived in October and were deployed to Nyala and El Fasher, respectively. The rotation of the Bangladeshi formed police unit in Nyala was completed in November.

6. The rotation of the 10 former African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) infantry battalions already deployed to Darfur is ongoing and will be completed in January 2009. Of these 10 battalions, two are deployed at the United Nations standard strength of 800 personnel. Six battalions will reach 800 total strength by the end of December 2008. The remaining two battalions will be upgraded to United Nations standard strength in early 2009.

7. The Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support of the Secretariat have been working with donors to ensure that the former AMIS battalions are deployed with requisite equipment, including armoured personnel carriers. Many of these troops have been operating with assets provided by donors to AMIS. It is expected that, in accordance with the force requirements, contingent-owned equipment will arrive in Darfur in the first half of 2009, allowing these battalions to operate as self-sustained units.

8. In the coming weeks, a number of military and police units will be deployed to Darfur. The units expected to deploy in December include the Pakistani level III Hospital and its 156 personnel, the 335-strong main body of the Pakistani engineering company, 450 Ethiopian troops from the first infantry battalion, a 300-personnel Ethiopian multi-role logistic unit, a 120-personnel Ethiopian Sector reconnaissance company, a 125-personnel Ethiopian medium transport unit, and two Nigerian formed police units.

9. The deployment of these units was facilitated by the improvement in road conditions at the end of the rainy season, which accelerated the movement, by road, of contingent-owned equipment into Darfur. As part of the United Nations efforts to accelerate deployment, the Department of Field Support and UNAMID have put in place special measures to increase capacity to move equipment to its final destination by air. With the deployment of additional IL76 aircraft, it is anticipated that the mission will have cleared the backlog of contingent-owned equipment at the logistics base in El Obeid by January 2009. The Department of Field Support and UNAMID are also in the process of deploying additional L100-class aircraft to speed up the delivery of contingent-owned equipment to the relatively small airfield in El Geneina. I am also pleased to report that engineering work for the Nyala supercamp is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2008, and the El Fasher and El Geneina supercamps are scheduled to be completed by the end of January 2009.

10. Nevertheless, serious logistical challenges remain. Airport infrastructure and aircraft handling capacity, as well as the possibility of deteriorating runway conditions, will continue to limit the number of daily flights in Darfur. While the capacity for road convoy movement of contingent-owned equipment is increasing, difficult road conditions within Darfur pose particular challenges for the transportation of heavy equipment.

11. The mission has taken measures to increase its engineering capacity, including through the expedited deployment of military engineers, partnership with the United

Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and recruitment of local contractors. A memorandum of understanding between UNAMID and UNOPS is being finalized to enhance the mission's capacity to construct community police centres and other UNAMID camps and infrastructure as required. UNAMID has also engaged the local market, receiving and evaluating bids from Sudanese vendors operating in Darfur.

12. It is estimated that by the end of December 2008, the total number of uniformed personnel deployed to UNAMID will reach approximately 60 per cent of the authorized strength. This goal will be reached as a result of our efforts to improve the movement of contingent-owned equipment into Darfur, enhance engineering capability, improve cooperation with the Government and work with troop- and police-contributing countries to ensure timely preparations for deployment. Achieving the objective of 80 per cent deployment by March 2009 will require effective action in each of these four areas.

13. Looking ahead, the readiness of troop- and police-contributing countries to deploy military and formed police units will be a particularly important factor in our collective efforts to finally bring UNAMID to its authorized strength. This places a heavy burden on contributing countries. A wide range of equipment must be procured; personnel must be trained on this equipment; systems and materials for maintaining this equipment in Darfur must be put in place; and provisions must be made for these units to sustain themselves in an extremely difficult environment. This is a complex and time-consuming process that is further complicated by the insecurity and political uncertainty in Darfur. It requires troop and police contributors to be meticulous in their preparations to ensure that units they deploy are ready to face the enormous challenges associated with deploying into Darfur. There is, at present, some slippage in these preparations which could result in delays in deployment. This issue is being addressed as a matter of highest priority by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support.

Tripartite mechanism for the deployment of UNAMID

14. In a continued effort to expedite the deployment of UNAMID, the second meeting of the Tripartite Committee was held on 16 November 2008. During the meeting, consensus was reached between the Government of the Sudan, the African Union Commission and the United Nations that the concrete steps taken to implement the agreements reached at the Tripartite Committee meeting on 7 October had been successful.

15. In addition to the follow-up from the 7 October meeting, UNAMID informed the Government of the Sudan that four tactical helicopters, pledged by Ethiopia, might be deployed sooner than previously anticipated. The Government of the Sudan agreed to work jointly with UNAMID to put in place any interim arrangements and undertake any preparation required for the deployment of these critical assets.

16. UNAMID also requested Government support to place one transport helicopter in each of the supercamps in order to allow for rapid medical evacuation. The Government agreed in principle to the proposal, and requested UNAMID to work with the relevant officials to develop the necessary implementation protocol. Lastly, the Government agreed to meet with UNAMID to discuss the allocation to the Mission of a frequency for a United Nations broadcast radio system for Darfur. It

was agreed that the next Tripartite Committee meeting on UNAMID would take place in January 2009 in Addis Ababa.

IV. UNAMID operations

17. The security level in Darfur remains at Phase IV. The continuous threat is characterized by high levels of banditry, carjacking, military engagements and deadly attacks on UNAMID forces. On 29 October, a peacekeeper was killed and another was injured after being attacked while guarding a water-point near the Kassab camp for internally displaced persons in Kutum, Northern Darfur. On 9 November, during an ambush of a UNAMID convoy travelling between the UNAMID supercamp and El Geneina road, one peacekeeper was injured and a vehicle was taken. During the reporting period, a total of 33 vehicles (17 belonging to the United Nations) and 11 trucks contracted by the World Food Programme (WFP) were hijacked.

18. Despite the heightened insecurity, UNAMID conducted 1,027 confidence-building patrols, 318 escort patrols and 29 investigation patrols during the reporting period, with an emphasis on facilitating humanitarian access and providing convoy protection. UNAMID police advisers also continued to conduct monitoring, confidence-building and firewood patrols, visiting community policing centres and Government police stations throughout Darfur. Farming patrols also continued throughout the region, contributing to a more secure environment for internally displaced persons and the local population to harvest their crops. In addition, UNAMID devised a zoning system in the camps of internally displaced persons, targeting areas of tension or insecurity for patrols, thus enhancing the effectiveness of its activities.

19. Following the shooting incident on 25 August at Kalma camp of internally displaced persons, where 32 such persons were killed and at least 85 injured, UNAMID continued to provide a 24/7 presence around Kalma camp, and established a mission-wide integrated approach to pursuing its mandate to protect internally displaced persons. The integrated approach, which will be implemented in three stages of conflict prevention, crisis response and post-crisis management, will require strong collaboration between UNAMID and the humanitarian community and full respect, by all parties, of their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law, Security Council resolutions and ceasefire agreements.

20. The approach recognizes the need for strengthened links between internally displaced persons, humanitarian interlocutors and relevant Government authorities to ensure that camps of internally displaced persons function as protected civilian communities. In the meantime, the Government set up a committee at state and national level to investigate the incident of 25 August. No public findings have been released and no individuals have been investigated or held responsible so far.

21. Community policing initiatives and investigation training for interventions in sexual and gender-based violence have started in all three sectors. These initiatives are designed to foster a closer partnership between the Government of the Sudan's Police, the movements and communities. In addition, a five-day training course on community policing was organized for the sheikhs in Abu Shouk camp of internally displaced persons in Northern Darfur.

22. UNAMID continued to engage local and national stakeholders and provide technical and advisory support to the peace process and local conflict resolution initiatives. The mission convened five training workshops on peace negotiations, mediation and leadership and on the Darfur Peace Agreement for civil society organizations, leaders of internally displaced persons and local administration leaders in Northern and Western Darfur; it also facilitated the resolution of four disputes among armed movements in Southern and Western Darfur. In addition, 56 quick-impact projects totalling $1.2 million were approved by UNAMID. Sixty per cent of the projects are in the education sector, mainly in Northern Darfur.

23. During the reporting period, UNAMID faced some restrictions on its freedom of movement. On 6 October, two demining experts contracted by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), who were travelling to Darfur with ID cards from the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), were stopped by Government officials at the Nyala airport for not possessing UNAMID identification or national passports. A staff member of the Service was called to intervene but was threatened with arrest and forced to leave Darfur on the first available flight on 7 October.

24. On 20 October, a UNAMID force escorting a Canadian delegation was denied access by the Government of the Sudan to Abu Shouk camp of internally displaced persons, Northern Darfur. On the same day, the Government banned a Mine Action Service team in Kutum from using GPS and digital cameras and from undertaking a casualty evacuation exercise mandatory for demining operations. The Government insisted on monitoring Mine Action Service operations as a precondition for its GPS use, a practice discouraged by the mine action safety procedure. The Mine Action Service made efforts until 15 November to resolve the problem; however, it was eventually forced to give up demining activities in Kutum, and relocated its staff to Tawila.

25. On 24 October, a joint Government of the Sudan military/police patrol stopped a UNAMID patrol in El Geneina, Western Darfur, and subsequently ordered UNAMID to stop conducting night patrols in the town. Previously, at a meeting on 22 October between UNAMID and Government officials (including representatives of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) and the Police), the Government had stated that patrols in towns were its responsibility and UNAMID should limit its patrols to camps of internally displaced persons exclusively. On the same day, a UNAMID patrol returning to Kutum was diverted to Um Baru because of clashes between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan-Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) in the area. There were also reports of Government aerial bombardments of villages in Kutum that day.

26. In addition, a one-month visa for a mission of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Sudan (Khartoum and Darfur) was unilaterally replaced by a seven-day visa on 26 October, and upon the mission's arrival in Khartoum, the Advisory Council for Human Rights decided to ban its travel to Darfur.

27. On 27 November 2008, NISS in Nyala Airport denied two Sudanese staff of a non-governmental organization (NGO) the right to travel to East Jebel Marra. On the same day, two other NGO national staff were denied travel to El Geneina by NISS at the airport. In Ed Daein, a routine food distribution by a humanitarian NGO

was also stopped by Government officials, who alleged that the food was not fit for human consumption.

V. Security situation

28. The security situation continued to be of concern during the reporting period owing to, inter alia, Government aerial bombardments and clashes between SAF and the armed rebel movements. In October, forces of the Government of the Sudan, supported by militia, engaged in military operations focused on reinforcing their positions and driving the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Unity from their areas of control. These military activities have led UNAMID to identify "no go areas" for United Nations personnel for reasons of safety, particularly east of Jebel Marra (Northern Darfur).

29. In Muhajeria and surrounding areas in Southern Darfur, seven separate armed tribal clashes reportedly took place from 5 to 11 October involving Ma'aliya, Messeriya and Birgid tribes, on one hand, and members of the Zaghawa tribe, on the other. At least 41 men and three children were killed and many were injured during the fighting. Seven women were reportedly raped during the clashes, a large amount of cultivated land was burnt and livestock was looted.

30. Despite the unilateral declaration of a cessation of hostilities by the Government on 12 November, aerial bombings were reportedly conducted in different locations in Northern Darfur, including Kurbia, Um Mahareik, Wadi Fede and Sayah between 12 and 15 November and in Jebel Moon, Kulbus and Silea (Western Darfur) on 17 November.

31. On 16 November, Government troops on patrol were ambushed in the Graida area in Southern Darfur. On the same day, Government police forces came under gunfire while conducting routine patrols between the cities of Buram and Joghana. This resulted in the death of two Government police officers.

32. UNAMID investigated reports of aerial attacks by the Government of the Sudan carried out on 21 and 22 November in Abu Dangal, Southern Darfur, and confirmed visible effects of air strikes, including four craters created by bombing and the presence of unexploded ordnance.

33. UNAMID continued to monitor human rights violations and abuses throughout Darfur, in particular violations of the right to life and security of the person, and sexual and gender-based violence. During the reporting period, UNAMID documented three incidents of excessive use of force by the Government, namely the Sudan security forces, in camps for the displaced. On 10 and 11 October two internally displaced persons were killed and at least eight others were injured, including an 8-year-old girl, when SAF soldiers entered Nertiti camp of internally displaced persons, in Zalingei, Western Darfur, and opened fire in the vicinity of the internally displaced persons.

34. During the reporting period, the mission continued to receive reports of the use of torture and ill-treatment against detainees in the custody of NISS. Four such cases were documented in Zalingei. The frequency of the cases, combined with the consistency of victims' accounts, points to the regular practice of torture or ill-treatment by NISS during interrogation of persons suspected of involvement with non-signatory movements. The tenth periodic report of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, issued on 28 November 2008, also points to a trend of arbitrary arrest and detention by NISS in Darfur.

35. Sexual and gender-based violence continues to occur, often in tandem with impunity and a lack of action from law enforcement authorities. Internally displaced women and girls conducting livelihood activities, such as gathering firewood or fetching water, remain most vulnerable. During the reporting period, UNAMID documented 19 incidents of gender-based violence, involving 54 victims, 24 of whom were reportedly raped. Almost all of the victims were internally displaced persons, the majority from Fur communities, with other victims from Erenga, Massalit and Zaghawa tribes. In nine cases, perpetrators were reportedly SAF members and/or men wearing military uniforms; two involved the Central Reserve Police (CRP), and seven involved suspected militia.

36. Of the 19 sexual and gender-based violence cases, only five were reported to and registered by the police. Four cases were not registered because of the absence of a police presence in the area, and in two cases the police declined to register them. Increased documentation of sexual and gender-based violence incidents may be partially attributed to the fact that, owing to the onset of the harvest season, women and girls are spending more time away from the relative safety of villages and camps of internally displaced persons and are thus more vulnerable to attacks.

37. In addition to taking forward mandated tasks within the limits of its capabilities, UNAMID is implementing a Security Enhancement Plan designed to mitigate the level of security risks to which staff are exposed by addressing key security-related issues: (a) protecting military camps and team sites against small arms fire and intrusion, (b) reducing vehicle hijacking, (c) relocating vulnerable compounds as well as providing temporary emergency accommodation to staff members in housing non-compliant with Minimum Operating Residential Security Standards (MORSS), (d) enhancing medical treatment and evacuation capacity, (e) enhancing command and control related to the implementation of security measures, (f) enhancing military mobility and (g) validating and updating evacuation plans.

38. The Darfur Integrated Security Task Force, which was created following the 25 August incident at Kalma camp, met for the first time on 26 November in Khartoum. UNAMID and the Government of the Sudan discussed the security situation in Darfur, requirements for a ceasefire-monitoring mechanism and the security risks of Kalma camp. The two sides agreed to hold regular monthly meetings, starting in January 2008.

VI. Humanitarian situation

39. Humanitarian aid organizations continue to struggle to maintain existing programmes and expand operations to recently accessible areas. The critical humanitarian challenges continue to be those of access and protection of civilians. The total number of new displacements this year has reportedly reached nearly 310,000 people. While this displacement or re-displacement is only temporary, the destruction, including of humanitarian infrastructure, and consequent delays in relief assistance redouble the suffering of the people of Darfur.

40. During the reporting period, 28 humanitarian vehicles were hijacked, including one hospital ambulance. Thirty-nine humanitarians were abducted during those hijacking incidents and 13 humanitarian premises were attacked by armed men. Moreover, 10 humanitarian convoys were stopped and looted and 21 humanitarian premises broken into or destroyed. On 14 October, an office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Mukhjar (Western Darfur) was attacked by Chadian refugees, who assaulted the staff and damaged vehicles and property. As a result of those targeted attacks, humanitarian staff relocated on two occasions.

41. The Government for its part has expressed frustration over the publication of data on the conflict in Darfur by the humanitarian community, and the absence of joint assessments which could attempt to produce consolidated figures as requested by the Humanitarian Aid Commission. In addition, the Government shared its concern over incidents of criminality and arms smuggling and the limited or blocked access by the local authorities to large camps of internally displaced persons, such as Kalma and the three Zalingei camps (Hamadiya, Hassa Hissa and Khamsa Dagaigo), preventing them from developing programmes in those camps. Following the incident in Kalma camp of internally displaced persons on 25 August 2008, one of UNAMID's attempts to reinforce the healing process has been to bring together local leaders of internally displaced persons and local authorities.

42. In a welcome development on 18 November, the Government of the Sudan announced the extension of the moratorium which facilitates the provision of humanitarian aid to Darfur until 31 January 2010. That development is expected to enhance the delivery of humanitarian assistance to up to 4.7 million conflict-affected persons.

43. On 24 November 2008, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, John Holmes, began his second visit to the Sudan to assess the challenging humanitarian situation in Darfur as well as to review the humanitarian situation in Southern Sudan. He noted that the humanitarian community continues to face challenges, and underlined the fact that the long-term presence of large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons is resulting in growing tensions and places an additional strain on an already fragile environment. He concluded that what is most urgently needed is a ceasefire, declared and respected by all parties, and a negotiated settlement to the conflict.

VII. Political process

44. In October, the Sudan People's Forum (SPF) was launched by President Omar Al-Bashir. The initiative represented an important step in the effort to find a political solution to the Darfur crisis. It was attended by senior leaders of all of the Sudan's main political parties, with the exception of the Popular Congress Party and the Sudan Communist Party, and included numerous representatives from Darfur, though not from the Darfur armed movements. A wide range of issues were discussed, including security, power-sharing and wealth-sharing.

45. The SPF concluded on 12 November with President Al-Bashir's announcement of an immediate unilateral ceasefire subject to the establishment of a ceasefire-monitoring mechanism, as well as the setting up of a programme for disarming militia groups and a community police service for camps of internally displaced

persons. The President also agreed, in principle, to individual and collective compensation for the victims of the conflict. He also agreed to end hostile propaganda and to discuss with the people of Darfur an increase in the number of States, from the current three. The issues of a single Darfur region and a Vice-President for Darfur were deferred. Some armed movements, including the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), have publicly rejected the conclusions of SPF, including the President's declaration of a unilateral ceasefire.

46. As a next step, SPF will seek to solicit the views of Darfurian stakeholders who were not represented during its meetings in Kenana, including the armed movements, internally displaced persons and civilians in those areas controlled by the armed movements, Darfurians in Khartoum and in the diaspora.

47. The Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) continues to provide a forum for discussions among a wide range of stakeholders in support of the peace process. During the reporting period, meetings were hosted by the peace centres at Darfur's three universities, representing an investment in capacity and institution-building for the region.

48. During the reporting period, the Joint Chief Mediator, Djibril Bassolé, undertook extensive consultations with the parties in an effort to obtain a commitment to expediently resolve the Darfur conflict. He met several times with senior officials of the Government of the Sudan as well as Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW), Khalil Ibrahim (JEM), SLA/Unity and the United Resistance Front. The Government of the Sudan and the rebel movements pledged to work closely with the Joint Chief Mediator on a framework agreement which would encompass the timing, venue, format and agenda for talks as well as a commitment to a cessation of hostilities. During his consultations, the Joint Chief Mediator has stressed the importance of security and the need for the parties to put an end to hostilities. As a follow-up to President Al-Bashir's unilateral declaration of a cessation of hostilities, the Joint Chief Mediator has been working with the parties and UNAMID to explore mechanisms for monitoring a cessation-of-hostilities agreement.

49. In October and November, the Joint Chief Mediator also met extensively with other stakeholders, including the Government of Qatar and the countries of the region. On 15 November, he also briefed the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council, where he stressed the importance of improved relations between Chad and the Sudan. During his discussions, the Joint Chief Mediator reiterated the importance of coordinated efforts and initiatives and emphasized the need for all Member States to use their influence on the parties to move towards a sustainable solution to the Darfur conflict. To that end, he participated in the Dakar Contact Group meeting held on 15 November in N'Djamena, where he also had extensive consultations with officials of the Government of Chad. On 27 to 30 November, Mr. Bassolé also held consultations on Darfur on the sidelines of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Doha. The Mediation has been working closely with the Government of Qatar on the possibility that peace talks may be held in Doha when the parties are ready to resume direct negotiations.

50. On 10 October, a joint delegation of Qatar, the African Union and the League of Arab States visited the three States of Darfur to discuss the possibility of peace talks in Doha. When the delegation met with the Governors of the three States, civil

society, and the UNAMID leadership, they reiterated their readiness to work closely with the AU-United Nations Joint Chief Mediator and UNAMID.

51. On 13 October, SAF and the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minnawi (SLA/MM) signed a memorandum of understanding on political and military coordination in El Fasher. Referred to as the "El Fasher Declaration", it is a product of the Joint Military Committee established following the meeting between Vice-President Osman Taha and SLA leader Minni Minnawi last September.

52. The Memorandum of Understanding outlines joint activities of the two parties with a view to looking into possible compensation for the death and damages resulting from the recent hostilities in East Jebel Marra, coordinating security arrangements in Darfur, encouraging and protecting trade and humanitarian access within the region, and bringing non-signatories of the Darfur Peace Agreement into the political process. In line with the Memorandum of Understanding, President Al-Bashir issued a decree directing the incorporation of the Darfur Peace Agreement into the interim constitution, which is currently being examined by the National Constitutional Commission, to be finalized and sent for adoption during the next session of the National Assembly. However, SLA/MM continues to deplore the lack of action by the Government to release funds for jointly agreed socio-economic projects.

53. On 6 and 7 November, an African Union fact-finding mission led by the former President of Burundi, Pierre Buyoya, visited Darfur to look into the relations between Chad and the Sudan, evaluate the efforts made so far to resolve the crisis and present recommendations to the African Union on the way forward. On 9 November, Chad and the Sudan exchanged ambassadors, and on 15 November both countries sent representatives to participate in the Dakar Agreement Contact Group meeting in N'Djamena.

VIII. Observations

54. Almost one year after the transfer of authority from AMIS to UNAMID, the AU-United Nations Operation continues to face enormous challenges. Violence and displacement continue, humanitarian operations are at risk, clashes between the parties occur with regrettable regularity and the parties have not yet reached a negotiated peace agreement.

55. In this environment, UNAMID has focused on the protection of civilians and the deployment of the remainder of the military and police components. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all troop- and police-contributing countries and donors, including the Friends of UNAMID, for their continued support for the mission. I also reiterate my appeal to those that are in a position to provide mission-critical capabilities to do so without further delay. Thus far, pledges for a multi-role logistics unit, a medium transport unit, a heavy transport unit, an aerial reconnaissance unit, light tactical helicopters, and 18 medium-utility helicopters are still outstanding.

56. Sustained Government support and cooperation will also continue to be critical to our efforts to deploy UNAMID and to the ability of the mission to carry out its mandated tasks. In this context, I welcome the Government of the Sudan's implementation of the Tripartite Committee's recommendations and count on the

Government to ensure implementation of those recommendations at all levels, both national and local.

57. At the same time, the Government has also made efforts to rejuvenate internal political dialogue through the multi-party SPF initiative. These efforts could potentially contribute to a negotiated settlement for Darfur. However, real progress can be measured only through concrete actions. To build confidence and demonstrate its seriousness, the Government will have to rapidly implement the SPF recommendations. It will be crucial that consultations take place in the Darfur States and that the Government follows through on the pledges it has made with respect to compensation, development aid and collaboration with the armed groups.

58. I welcomed President Al-Bashir's unilateral declaration on 12 November of a cessation of hostilities. However, I am greatly disappointed that military activity by the Government continues. The reports of violence, clashes and aerial bombardments since the unilateral ceasefire declaration of 12 November are of serious concern. They do not echo the constructive intent reflected in the Government's statements. I call again on all parties to use restraint and renew their commitment to an immediate and unconditional cessation of hostilities.

59. A genuine cessation of hostilities is an essential precondition for the peaceful dialogue that will be necessary for peace talks to succeed. By ending hostilities, the parties can demonstrate their seriousness with respect to a political settlement. The AU-United Nations Joint Chief Mediator has been making progress on developing a framework agreement, which will form the basis for substantive peace talks when the parties are ready. His success depends on the parties' willingness to constructively engage in the peace process and the unwavering support of the international community to ensure that all other initiatives coalesce under Mr. Bassolé's mediation efforts.

60. The cessation of hostilities is also required to facilitate delivery of vital humanitarian assistance. I am deeply concerned that insecurity continues to seriously affect civilians and hamper the humanitarian community's efforts to provide them with life-saving assistance.

61. I welcome the Government's extension of the joint communiqué on humanitarian access and urge the Government to do more to ensure that those agreements are fulfilled in Khartoum and in Darfur. I also call on the Government to comply with its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law, in particular with regard to the protection of civilians. While the situation at Kalma has stabilized following the incident of 25 August, there are still disturbing reports of intimidation and harassment of internally displaced persons, especially women, who are the victims of marauding militia groups.

62. With respect to the application of 14 July by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for an arrest warrant against President Al-Bashir, the United Nations respects the independence of the Court and its judicial process, and stresses the critical importance of full compliance by all parties with the actions of the Court. Our peacekeeping operations and humanitarian and development work in the Sudan will continue in an impartial manner, cooperating in good faith with all partners to further the goal of peace and stability in the country.

63. Despite the constructive declarations over the reporting period, the fighting in Darfur continues, innocent civilians still suffer, UNAMID and humanitarian

personnel are under threat and the parties have failed to seriously pursue a political solution. I cannot overemphasize the need for the parties to demonstrate their commitment to a peaceful settlement of the Darfur conflict by undertaking concrete actions to reduce violence and ease human suffering. Ultimately, peace cannot be imposed. Both the Government of the Sudan and the armed rebel movements must come to the realization that violence will not achieve the objectives they seek and that the crisis in Darfur can be resolved only through political negotiations and a comprehensive and inclusive peace agreement.

United Nations S/2008/782

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 December 2008

Original: English

Report of the Security Council mission to Afghanistan, 21 to 28 November 2008

I. Summary

1. In a letter dated 21 July 2008, the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General of the Council's intention to send a mission to Afghanistan in November 2008. The terms of reference were subsequently approved on 31 October 2008 and distributed to Members of the Security Council (see annex I to the present report). The mission was led by Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata (Italy). The other members of the mission were Olivier Belle (Belgium), Paul Robert Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso), Liu Zhenmin (China), Saúl Weisleder (Costa Rica), Toma Galli (Croatia), Jean-Pierre Lacroix (France), R.M. Marty M. Natalegawa (Indonesia), Ahmed Gebreel (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Alfredo Suescum (Panama), Konstantin Dolgov (Russian Federation), Dumisani Kumalo (South Africa), John Sawers (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Zalmay Khalilzad (United States of America) and Bui The Giang (Viet Nam).

2. The mission left New York in two groups on 21 and 22 November and returned on 28 November. The mission met with the President of Afghanistan, Hâmid Karzai, and a number of his ministers; the Speakers of the upper and lower houses of parliament, Sibghatullah Mojadeddi and Younus Qanooni, respectively; the chairmen of parliamentary commissions and other members of parliament; the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and the Independent Election Commission; the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its Senior Civilian Representative in Kabul and representatives of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF); members of the diplomatic community, including the European Union troika and the head of the European Union police mission; civil society organizations; national and international non-governmental organizations; and senior staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations country team. The mission also visited Herat, where it met with officials of the UNAMA regional office, the provincial Governor and other Afghan officials, and the provincial reconstruction team (see annex II for schedule of meetings). This was the Security Council's third visit to Afghanistan since 2002, missions having previously visited in November 2003 and November 2006.

3. The mission was grateful for the frankness of all of its interlocutors. It was also grateful for the close coordination between the Secretariat and UNAMA in

08-64544 (E) 261208

preparation for the visit, the flawless organization by UNAMA and the highly professional logistical and security support provided by ISAF. The mission also expresses its gratitude to the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, as well as the Government of Afghanistan, for their effective efforts to safeguard the mission while it was in Afghanistan.

II. Key issues

Overall security situation

4. The Security Council has repeatedly expressed its serious concern about the security situation in Afghanistan, in particular the increase in violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremist groups. The mission noted three prominent features of the security situation described by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security. The first is the enduring split between northern and southern Afghanistan in terms of volatility and risk. The Department assessed the western, northern, north-eastern and central highlands regions as calm (with the western region showing some signs of deterioration), while describing the southern, south-eastern and eastern regions as volatile. The central region, where Kabul is located, was described as unstable. Both the Department of Safety and Security and ISAF described the situation as one of increasing instability in some pockets in the northern part of the country where Pashtuns predominate, as well as of deteriorating security in the provinces of Logar and Wardak, adjacent to Kabul.

5. The second feature is the striking year-on-year increase in the numbers of security incidents since 2003. The Department of Safety and Security counts as incidents armed clashes, abductions, improvised explosive devices and suicide attacks. In 2003, it counted 508 incidents, compared with 6,792 as at the end of October 2008. The monthly figures for security incidents since 2005, when the Department considers the insurgency to have begun, were 428 for 2006, 573 for 2007 and 740 for the first 10 months of 2008. The Department estimates that, contrary to the situation in previous years, when a decrease in the number of incidents per month was observed in the fourth quarter as a result of weather conditions, the tempo of the increase will not diminish noticeably during the winter, owing to an influx of foreign fighters, the ongoing voter registration process, which provides a vulnerable and attractive target of opportunity for anti-Government elements, and the fact that all parties intend to sustain their activities during the winter.

6. The third feature of interest is the increase in the number of incidents targeting the greater humanitarian and development community. These take the form of attacks on convoys and aid facilities, as well as the intimidation, abduction and killing of aid workers. The Department of Safety and Security considers that, increasingly, the United Nations is a target.

7. In the effort to understand what has driven the increase in violence over the past several years, four main factors were repeatedly identified by various interlocutors. The factors were (a) the influx of militants recruited from outside Afghanistan (UNAMA estimated that 20 per cent of insurgents were from outside the country, while the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dâdfar Spantâ, estimated that the actual percentage was higher; (b) insufficient — albeit improving — integration and coordination of military, political, governance and development efforts, all of

which are necessary for stability; (c) lack of widespread reconstruction and employment opportunities, combined with a large number of unemployed young men; and (d) frustration with the tactics of the international forces, including civilian casualties caused by combat operations of international forces. The Minister for Foreign Affairs told the mission that it was important to understand that the insurgency was not a homogenous movement. There were certainly political motivations rooted in the fundamentalist attitudes of the Taliban, but the latter had been joined by a conglomeration of dissatisfied tribal groups, as well as criminal and drug gangs.

8. Representatives from ISAF concurred with the United Nations analysis of worsening trends in terms of the number of incidents, the sophistication of insurgent tactics and the increase in the number of civilians killed. On the other hand, ISAF stated that, despite public perceptions, security in Kabul was actually improving, and that the main problem was criminality, rather than insurgency. Another positive development was the increased capacity of the Afghan National Army, with ISAF-only operations now being an exception.

9. The Government of Afghanistan (in particular the President and the Minister for Foreign Affairs), UNAMA and ISAF all stressed the great improvement in relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan following the election of the President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, earlier in 2008. The improved relationship was centred on a realization that the two Governments face a common threat.

International Security Assistance Force, the Afghan National Army and civil-military coordination

10. The Secretary-General of NATO recalled that ISAF operated under a Security Council mandate. He emphasized the central role of the United Nations in operationalizing the comprehensive approach to stabilization. The need to improve coordination between civilian and military operations in Afghanistan was raised by both the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Kai Eide, and NATO representatives. The Special Representative insisted that the lack of capacity on the part of the international community or the Afghan National Security Forces to "hold" areas that were "cleared" made it difficult to expect non-governmental organizations or the United Nations to provide assistance in the aftermath of counter-insurgency operations. The briefing by ISAF supported that analysis, noting that, for the first time, its ongoing Operation Tolo, focusing on 16 districts, was designed to hold areas after they had been cleared. Success would depend on the deployment of further international forces. ISAF said that it was fully aware of its mandate to support UNAMA and consulted closely with it. Another area of progress mentioned both by the Special Representative and NATO was the adoption of civil-military guidelines for the provision of humanitarian assistance by ISAF.

11. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General agreed that civil-military coordination had improved, but noted that the military often underestimated the in-depth understanding that UNAMA had of Afghan society, which was largely a result of the presence of Afghan staff in the mission. That understanding was, however, undermined by the frequent rotation of ISAF staff and troops. The intelligence gathered by international military forces needed to be complemented by a knowledge of Afghan society, which was particularly important in understanding

the frustrations that the Afghan people experienced as a result of international military tactics, exacerbated by the lack of access to international military forces to address their concerns.

12. The ongoing occurrence of civilian casualties caused by international military forces has become a major political issue in Afghanistan. President Karzai stressed that the problem involved not only civilian casualties, but a set of aggravating tactics, such as house searches and the arrest of Afghans. He reiterated his overall appreciation for the role of the international forces in fighting terrorism and the insurgency. At the same time, he cautioned that, while there was "immense legitimacy in the minds of the Afghan people [for] the presence of the international community in Afghanistan", it may not last forever. Among the changes required were the building of the army and the police and an end to aerial bombardments and the forced entry into Afghan homes.

13. ISAF was clearly focused on the question of civilian casualties and had issued two new tactical directives to reduce the probability of civilian casualties. It stressed, however, that the insurgency was responsible for the vast majority of civilian casualties in Afghanistan, in particular through suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices (almost 3,000 of such devices had been planted by the insurgency, half of which had been discovered and dismantled by ISAF). Improvised explosive devices and other terrorist attacks by the insurgents had killed 925 civilians to date in 2008, compared with 87 deaths caused by combat operations between ISAF and anti-Government elements and 131 by combat operations between Operation Enduring Freedom and terrorist forces. ISAF expressed frustration that those facts were scarcely reported in the international press and that the Government of Afghanistan frequently condemned civilian casualties caused accidentally during counter-terrorism operations but ignored the vast majority caused deliberately by the insurgency, which systematically targets civilians as part of its strategy.

14. A positive development was the increased capacity of the Afghan National Army. ISAF representatives reported that ISAF-only operations were now an exception; the vast majority of operations were joint operations and many were Afghan-led. Other interlocutors informed the mission that up to 60 per cent of operations were Afghan-led. The strength of the army lay in its extremely capable soldiers; its weakness lay in its institutional capacity, an area where ISAF believed it could make a larger contribution. The army's current strength is approximately 80,000. The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board in October 2008 approved an increased strength of 134,000, to be achieved by 2012. President Karzai urged that that timetable for expansion be moved forward to 2010.

15. The provincial reconstruction teams were a key vehicle for civil-military coordination. During its visit to Herat, the mission noted that the activities of the teams had been well received by provincial leaders there. The Governor and members of the Provincial Council underlined the importance of the quick-impact assistance projects implemented by the Herat provincial reconstruction team. At the same time, some concerns were expressed about the overall quantity of international assistance. The mission was not able to gain a comprehensive view of the provincial reconstruction teams, owing to the fact that each differs according to its national sponsor and its location within Afghanistan. Nonetheless, a general concern was

voiced by Afghan civil society and international non-governmental organizations that the teams were contributing to the "securitization of development".

Governance

16. Although, as described to the mission, the overriding objective of the insurgency is to undermine the Government's capacity and legitimacy, it is also evident that improved governance is indispensable to achieving stability in Afghanistan.

17. The mission identified several factors that were impeding good governance. President Karzai emphasized the lack of administrative capacity resulting from decades of war, as well as the lack of a tradition of government authority.

18. It was apparent to the mission, that the most immediate impediment to governance, raised by both governmental and non-governmental interlocutors, was governmental corruption at both the national and subnational levels. The Governor of Herat informed the mission that he had implemented a merit-based system to select government officials. Nonetheless, civil society actors there complained that patronage still affected most appointments.

19. Yasin Osmani, Director of the High Office for Oversight, which was established three months ago with a mandate to address the issue of corruption, briefed the mission on the activities of his Office. He asserted that prosecutorial investigation was a function of the Office of the Attorney General and that the High Office would not create constitutional confusion in that regard. The Office would, however, monitor the implementation of anti-corruption plans in each ministry, as well as receive complaints about corruption from the population at large and manage the processing of such complaints. President Karzai assured the mission of his determination to attack corruption, pointing to the recent dismissal of Cabinet ministers for corruption, as well as to the prosecution of public officials.

20. A second major problem was the lack of effective governance at the local level. The mission was informed that there were significant gaps between the central Government and the provincial Governors, particularly regarding the delivery of funding. Subnational administrative structures were underresourced and lacked the capacity to effectively administer justice, provide security and deliver services. That governance gap had created a vacuum that had been filled by ad hoc structures, such as the provincial reconstruction teams, to provide services. President Karzai emphasized the long-term dangers posed by such "parallel structures".

21. The Government's response to the weakness of local-level administration has been led by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, created in August 2007. The head of the Directorate, Jilani Popal, informed the mission of two main initiatives created to address that fundamental issue. The first was the reform of the policy development process, which will give significantly more responsibility to subnational governmental units in the development of policies and the implementation of programmes. The second and more immediate initiative was the Afghan Social Outreach Programme, which will, through the creation of district shuras, empower local communities to engage with development-related issues, build social capital, channel the grievances of the people and assume greater responsibility for local-level security, as exemplified by the Focused District Development programme (see para. 24 below). He stressed that that did not mean

arming local militias to provide community-level security. The launch of the programme in four or five provinces in the southern part of the country is imminent.

Afghan National Police

22. According to most of the mission's interlocutors, the Afghan National Police is seen as a major element to be reformed within the overall security and rule-of-law structure. A number of interlocutors stated that the police force continues to be affected by corruption, poor training and lack of equipment, although much more attention has been paid recently by the international community to training and equipping the police, as well as improving the management of the payroll. The police have paid a high price for their perceived weakness, as they have become frequent targets of the insurgency. According to the Minister of the Interior, 920 members of the Afghan National Police had been killed in 2008.

23. President Karzai informed the mission that he had appointed a new Minister of the Interior in order to bring about needed reform of the Afghan National Police. According to the new Minister, Hanif Atmar, community leadership and intelligence-led policing was central to the reform programme. The Minister identified four specific ways in which the international community could assist with police reform: (a) increasing the number of mentors and trainers; (b) providing force protection, through provincial reconstruction teams, for international trainers as they deploy outside Kabul; (c) funding of the police through the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan; and (d) acting with greater speed with regard to those issues. Mr. Atmar said that the Government fully understood that it needed to send a signal to change public perception of the police force and improve its accountability. He stressed in particular his expectation of an increased contribution by the European Union police mission.

24. The mission also met with the head of the European Union police mission, among other key representatives of the European Union. He confirmed that the Government was very much engaged in police reform and aware of the need to generate visible changes. The police mission was committed to reaching its full complement of 269 police trainers and 121 civilian experts (the current deployment level is 121 trainers and 56 civilians). In the meantime, it was working with the Minister of the Interior to "Afghanize" training. The project was coordinated with the Focused District Development project, which was implemented by the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, and was reforming district-level policing by removing district police units, training the police outside their district and providing them with mentors when they returned.

National reconciliation

25. The perceived inability of Afghan and international forces to defeat the insurgency has led to calls for talks with insurgent groups. President Karzai outlined his vision of a national reconciliation process, while noting that he understood some concerns voiced by international partners. Given the inability to conclusively defeat the insurgency over the past seven years, the President suggested that the international community provide a tentative timeline to finally bring about stability and end violence in Afghanistan. If such a horizon could not be foreseen, then the people would be encouraged to seek stabilization through further reconciliation efforts. He reiterated his readiness to engage in talks with those who are ready to

renounce violence and accept the Afghan Constitution. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General reiterated his view that the reconciliation process needed to be led by Afghans, be based on the Constitution and be conducted from a position of strength. ISAF concurred with the Special Representative that it was important to conduct reconciliation activities from a position of strength.

26. Some members of the Afghan human rights community, while agreeing about the importance of reconciliation at the grass-roots level, warned that many Afghans feared that political reconciliation efforts were a "mask" for an alliance between the Government and the more fundamentalist forces in Afghanistan. They feared that such an alliance could undermine the gains in human rights achieved since 2002.

Elections

27. The upcoming elections, scheduled for 2009, were absorbing significant political energy in Afghanistan; their exact date has become an issue of contention. In April 2008, the Independent Election Commission had announced the consensus decision, reached following consultations with the President, the Speakers of the upper and lower houses of parliament and other key Afghan stakeholders, to hold presidential and provincial council elections in the fall of 2009 and National Assembly and district council elections in the late summer/fall of 2010. The Speaker of the Wolesi Jirga (lower house), Younus Qanooni, was of the view that the Constitution specified that the election had to be held within two months prior to the constitutional expiration of the President's term of office, on 21 May. Others noted ambiguities in the Constitution. President Karzai told the mission that he had always been against extending his term beyond its legal limit, but noted that his term, specified in the Constitution as five years, had begun in November 2004, not May 2004, owing to delays in the first post-conflict election. He said that he would accept any date set by the Commission, which was the only body legally competent to take the decision.

28. The mission registered more practical concerns about the difficulty of holding elections in the spring. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for example, said that the ongoing registration process, while proceeding well, would not take place in the more insecure areas until early 2009. It was therefore not certain that the revised voter register would be ready in time for a spring election. Two other factors made an early election unrealistic: the need to improve security in the southern part of the country, which in part depended on the deployment of additional international forces, and the need to secure international donor funding for the election.

29. Azizullah Lodin, Chairman of the Independent Election Commission, and some members of his staff, including Daoud Najafi, the Chief Electoral Officer and head of the Commission secretariat, informed the mission that a May election would disenfranchise those voters who lived in areas that were inaccessible due to poor weather conditions. The Commission also cited article 55 of the Electoral Law, which authorizes the Commission to delay or postpone elections if there are prevailing factors that might call into question their legitimacy. He said that he was involved in ongoing consultations with the President, the National Assembly and other political leaders with a view to finding a solution. He said that the Commission would make a decision in the coming week or so, taking into account

both the provisions of the Afghan Constitution and the requirement to ensure free and fair elections throughout the country.

Regional cooperation

30. The improvement in the relationship of Afghanistan with its neighbours, especially Pakistan, as already noted, was among the positive developments noted during the mission. President Karzai underlined that he had taken great efforts to ensure that neighbouring countries did not see the presence of international troops in Afghanistan as a threat to them. He stressed, as did the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the constructive relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as with India and Pakistan. He also stressed that those relations were part of a regional approach and that they were centred on Afghanistan as an economic bridge, not a political rival to any country in the region. The mission was informed of initiatives fostering regional cooperation, such as the International Conference on Return and Reintegration, held in Kabul on 19 November under the co-chairmanship of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Aid coordination, effectiveness and economic development

31. The mission was informed that perceived inefficiencies in the delivery of international assistance had undermined the confidence of the Afghan population in its Government and in the international community. The Declaration of the Paris Conference of 12 June 2008 included a number of provisions to reduce those inefficiencies.

32. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General informed the mission of efforts that he had made to increase the coordination capacity of UNAMA, including the appointment of a special adviser on aid effectiveness. Those efforts remained limited by the lack of a comprehensive picture of the aid being provided to Afghanistan, as well as by the continued unwillingness of some donors to fully back the existing coordination mechanisms, especially the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board. The Government of Afghanistan had taken a number of steps to enhance its participation in the Board, but they had not always been reciprocated by Board members. The Special Representative was also concerned about the concentration of aid in conflict areas, which was to the detriment of more stable regions where the returns on aid could be much higher. President Karzai strongly supported the Special Representative coordination mandate and pledged that his Government would provide anything that the Special Representative sought.

33. The Special Representative said that progress in implementing the Afghanistan National Development Strategy was accelerating, but that the costing of projects under the Strategy took time, especially given the weak bureaucracy of the Afghan Government. The Minister of Finance, Anwar Ul-Haq Ahady, noted the ongoing reluctance of donors to work through Afghan institutions, which was essential if the Strategy was to be effective.

34. The United Nations country team highlighted its efforts to address development challenges in light of the priorities identified at Paris. One of those priorities was agriculture. According to the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Afghanistan had the land, soil and water resources to greatly improve its agricultural output. With a restoration

and expansion of the irrigation network and increased provision of improved seeds, food yields in Afghanistan could rise by a third to 3.5 tons per hectare quite rapidly, and eventually to as much as 8 tons.

35. Referring to the responsibility of Afghanistan for its own development, the Minister of Finance said that Government revenues had risen from 3.2 per cent of Gross Domestic Product a few years ago to 7 per cent currently, and that the goal was to increase that figure to 10 per cent over the next few years, amounting to $900 million. In 2002, total Government revenues were $113 million. Tariffs were responsible for 42 per cent of all revenues, but a number of tax reforms were expected to reduce the Government's reliance on customs taxes. The export sector was still relatively small, accounting for about $500 million to $600 million, mostly in carpets and fruit. A major problem was that the country lacked the capacity to add value to its exports — for example, it lacked industrial machinery to dry fruit for export, which would allow it to be sent to more distant markets where it would fetch higher prices. Foreign exchange reserves were approximately $3.4 billion, compared with $180 million in 2002.

Humanitarian situation

36. UNAMA described a deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, resulting from a combination of natural disasters, lack of Government capacity to prepare and respond, and insecurity. Almost 40 per cent of Afghanistan is either permanently or temporarily inaccessible to governmental and non-governmental aid. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will, in 2009, assume responsibility for humanitarian coordination, and is establishing offices in five field locations, in addition to the head office in Kabul.

37. The humanitarian situation has been aggravated by the deficit in food production in 2008. The percentage of the population unable to meet its minimum food requirements has risen by 5 per cent since 2005, to 35 per cent. As reported by the representative of FAO, some 40,000 Afghans die every year as a result of hunger and poverty, 25 times more than die as a result of violence. Since September 2007, wheat prices have jumped by 150 per cent. That increase, combined with a 20 to 30 per cent drop in agricultural production due to drought, has led the World Food Programme (WFP) to assess 8.8 million Afghans as being vulnerable to food shortages. WFP plans to bring 300,000 tons of food to Afghanistan in 2009. President Karzai, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and civil society representatives referred to the importance of funding the recent food appeal for Afghanistan, which had a subscription rate of less than 50 per cent.

38. In a briefing by the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief, the mission was informed of the concerns of non-governmental organizations regarding humanitarian access, particularly given the risks for workers (30 have been killed in 2008 to date, of whom 25 were Afghan). The Agency Coordinating Body welcomed the opening of an office of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Afghanistan, but noted that resources had not followed the call for greater United Nations coordination. Afghan non-governmental organizations indicated that more attention should be dedicated by international non-governmental organizations to building the capacities of their local partners.

Counter-narcotics

39. One of the positive trends of which the mission was informed was a 19 per cent reduction in the area of poppy cultivated, a 6 per cent reduction in the opium yield and an increase to 18 in the number of poppy-free provinces. At the same time, the continued cultivation and production of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan remained the subject of serious concern. The Minister of Counter-Narcotics, Khodaidad Khodaidad, said that the approach to counter-narcotics had grown more sophisticated and that he expected a reduction of 20 to 30 per cent in the area cultivated in 2009. Efforts to prevent poppy planting had been conducted earlier and had been more successful; cooperation with neighbours, in terms of both conducting border checks and sharing intelligence, had improved. Further efforts needed to be made, however, to attack the centres of refining and trafficking, as well as the movement of precursors into Afghanistan from abroad. The mission was particularly interested to learn about the expanded role of ISAF in combating illegal narcotics, including by the targeting of narcotics markets and refining sites. The mission was informed by ISAF that, as a follow-up to the summit held in Bucharest in 2008, ministers of defence of the countries members of NATO had decided that contributing countries could attack, at their discretion and upon request by the Afghan authorities, illegal narcotics activities, as long as there was a clear link between those activities and the insurgency.

Human rights and the rule of law

40. The mission was given a mixed picture of the human rights situation in Afghanistan and informed that a number of improvements made since 2002 were under threat. Some non-governmental organizations suggested that Afghan politicians were resorting to measures that they considered to be popular but that violated human rights. Overall, members of the Afghan human rights community expressed the view that there was a narrowing of political space in the run-up to the elections and that gains in freedom of expression, in particular, were under threat.

41. The threat to freedom of expression was particularly worrying given the upcoming elections. According to human rights defenders, threats came not only from the Government, which was able to put pressure on State media employees and arrest journalists, but also from the private sector. It was also underlined that international military forces did not allow reporters to travel to conflict areas. The fundamental problem was that the Government did not respect its own media law and the international community remained insufficiently concerned about defending freedom of expression.

42. Another area of concern were the rights of women. On the one hand, the Marriage Registration Act, which had been in force since March of 2008, should help to prevent forced marriages, multiple marriages and the use of marriage as a means of resolving disputes between communities. On the other hand, women remained extremely vulnerable and were disproportionately affected by economic and humanitarian crises. While there had been some improvements in maternal health, the life expectancy of women was only 43 years. The role of women in political life had actually worsened since 2004, when there had been at least four female Cabinet ministers. Women who did accept public positions were intimidated and some had been killed. The mission was also informed of the need to intensify

efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

43. A major human rights issue was the question of impunity and transitional justice. In 2005, the Government had approved an action plan for transitional justice. Implementation of the plan had been overshadowed, however, by the debate in parliament over the amnesty law, whose status remained unclear.

44. Similarly, respect for human rights fundamentally depended on an effective judiciary and a legal framework. The judiciary in Afghanistan was not trusted, in large part because it was perceived to be corrupt or inefficient. According to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, recent surveys suggested that only 25 per cent of Afghans trusted their judiciary. In response, President Karzai noted that there had never been a fully trusted judiciary in Afghanistan, and establishing one would take several decades. In the meantime, people would inevitably use traditional mechanisms, which were both faster and more recognizable to them.

III. Observations

Overall situation

45. The mission noted important elements of progress, which give rise to a sense of cautious optimism for the future: first, the marked improvement in the relations with Pakistan; secondly, the recent Cabinet appointments, which are expected to bring about increased energy and efficiency on the part of the Government, for example, in the fight against corruption; thirdly, the significant reduction in the area of opium cultivation (19 per cent), as reported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; fourthly, the commitment to improve subnational governance, including through the launch of the Afghanistan Social Outreach Programme, which aims to bridge the gap between Government authorities and local communities; and fifthly, the registration of nearly 2 million Afghans without major security incident in the first two phases of the voter registration project. Those gains must be built upon, especially in the coming year.

Security situation

46. Afghanistan is faced with an increasingly complex security situation, but not, as yet, a security crisis. The mission considered it to be important to differentiate the politically driven insurgency from criminality, which is partly responsible for the insecurity, while noting that both problems must be addressed and that it is not easy to draw a clear line between those two elements in the case of Afghanistan. The mission also noted that the insurgency is reportedly concentrated in specific regions and that it does not offer any alternative model of government, even though it gives the impression that it is omnipresent. In addressing those problems, it is important to avoid any inclination towards disillusion, frustration, or, even worse, mutual recrimination between Afghanistan and its friends. Afghans and the international community must redouble their joint efforts in a spirit of partnership. The empowerment of the Afghan security forces is essential if sustainable progress is to be ensured, and the international community is committed to responding to Afghan requests to accelerate progress in that regard. Civil-military coordination is gradually improving and should be sustained further.

Governance and the fight against corruption

47. There is a clear understanding of the need to make robust progress in uprooting corruption and improving governance at all levels, as recognized by many Afghan interlocutors. The enhancement of the Afghan judiciary is a crucial component of that process. There is also a strong expectation of greater transparency and improved coordination of efforts on the part of the international community, in accordance with the Paris Declaration. It was stressed that every party to the Paris Conference should do its utmost to implement the commitments made there as expeditiously as possible. The mission noted and appreciated the Government's strong support for the coordination role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Kai Eide, as well as the enhanced capacity of UNAMA to carry it out.

Elections

48. The mission was presented with a wide range of opinions on the constitutional debate over when elections were required in 2009. It was also informed of the significant financial, security and logistical challenges, which will also have an effect on when elections can be held. The overall success of the two first phases of voter registration is a positive sign, but it will be important to monitor closely voter registration as it moves into more insecure areas in the final phases. The mission considers that free and fair elections are necessary if the legitimacy of the Afghan authorities is to be renewed and the greater confidence of the people gained. The Independent Election Commission appeared fully committed to achieving that goal. President Karzai stressed the importance of elections taking place in all parts of the country.

National reconciliation

49. The mission noted the calls among Afghan political leaders and civil society representatives for dialogue with those elements in opposition to the Government who were ready to renounce violence and accept the Afghan Constitution. The mission recalled that the Security Council had encouraged the implementation of Afghan-led reconciliation programmes within the framework of the Afghan Constitution and with full respect for the implementation of measures introduced by the Council in its resolution 1267 (1999) and other relevant resolutions of the Council. A number of interlocutors, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, reaffirmed that any dialogue with anti-Government elements must be conducted by the Afghan authorities from a position of strength, and that the renunciation of violence and respect for the Afghan Constitution must constitute the red lines of any negotiation. Negotiations were a complement to the fight against terrorism, not an alternative, and their endorsement by the international community would be sought at some point. The process must lead to democratization. While, as noted, many Afghans called for discussions to end the violence, none of the mission's interlocutors said that they wanted to see the return to power of the Taliban.

Civilian casualties

50. The Security Council has repeatedly expressed its concern for all civilian casualties in Afghanistan. According to the most recent data shared with the mission

by ISAF, the large majority of such casualties are caused by the insurgents, who often deliberately target civilians as part of their strategy. The mission was informed of the closer attention that ISAF pays to avoiding civilian casualties, recent steps taken to reduce casualties and provide redress when they do occur and efforts to harmonize statistical data with those of the United Nations.

Regional cooperation

51. The significant improvement in the relationships of Afghanistan with its neighbours was welcomed by the mission. The Security Council has consistently supported a regional approach to bringing about security that is also supportive of regional economic development. The mission also welcomed cooperation between the Government of Afghanistan and its neighbours on specific issues that promote improved border control, such as counter-narcotics and the return of refugees. Afghan interlocutors welcomed planned initiatives to foster regional cooperation, such as those being organized by France and by the incoming Italian presidency of the Group of Eight.

Food security

52. The mission was informed of unprecedented measures being adopted to ensure food security during the winter season. It noted concerns that funding was not in place to provide food aid after March. The mission encourages donors to channel their contributions through the Government of Afghanistan or WFP.

Civil society and human rights

53. The mission considered its meetings with representatives of civil society to be extremely beneficial. Adequate time should be allocated for such meetings in future missions. The mission was extensively briefed on the overall progress made on human rights since 2001, as well as concerns about reversing trends with respect to human rights in some areas, in particular freedom of expression, intimidation of human rights defenders and impunity. The mission encouraged the Afghan authorities to reinvigorate their efforts to uphold human rights, in particular those of women and children, and fight against impunity. It reiterated its full support for the courageous activities of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and urged the Government to fully fund the budget of the Commission.

United Nations role

54. The mission welcomed the strong support from international actors for the coordination role of UNAMA. The mission also noted full support for that role from the Afghan authorities. President Karzai expressed complete satisfaction with the cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The mission urged the States Members of the United Nations to provide UNAMA with the necessary financial and human resources so that it could live up to its mandate.

Annex I

Terms of reference of the Security Council mission to Afghanistan

1. To reaffirm the Security Council's continued support for the Government and people of Afghanistan as they rebuild their country, strengthen the foundations of sustainable peace and constitutional democracy and assume their rightful place in the community of nations;

2. To review the progress made by the Afghan Government, with the assistance of the international community and in accordance with the Afghanistan Compact, in addressing the interconnected challenges in the areas of security, governance, rule of law and human rights, economic and social development, as well as on the cross-cutting issue of counter-narcotics;

3. To assess the status of implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 1806 (2008) and 1833 (2008), as well as of mutual pledges and commitments made by the participants to the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan, held in Paris on 12 June 2008;

4. To underline, in this context, the central and impartial role that the United Nations continues to play in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan by leading the civilian efforts of the international community and to express strong support for the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative for Afghanistan and the women and men of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA);

5. To review the implementation of the enhanced coordinating role assigned to UNAMA and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General by Security Council resolution 1806 (2008), taking into account the need for an integrated approach and the principle of reinforcing Afghan ownership and leadership;

6. To review efforts by the Afghan Authorities, with the assistance of the international community, to address the threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegal armed groups, criminals and those involved in the narcotics trade and in the diversion of chemical precursors;

7. To review the humanitarian situation in the country, including the food security situation, and the implications for security and stability;

8. To assess the cooperation, coordination and mutual support between UNAMA and the International Security Assistance Force, including on humanitarian and human rights issues and in supporting the electoral process, taking due account of their respective designated responsibilities;

9. To reaffirm the crucial importance of advancing regional cooperation as an effective means to promote governance, security and development in Afghanistan.

Annex II

Schedule of meetings of the Security Council mission to Afghanistan

Monday, 24 November

0830	Arrival in Kabul from Islamabad
1400-1430	Mission organization meeting
1430-1700	Meeting with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Kai Eide, and situational security briefing
1730-1830	Meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dâdfar Spantâ
1830-2030	Dinner hosted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Tuesday, 25 November

0800-0900	Meeting with Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
0930-1030	Meeting with the Deputy Commander and staff of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)
1100-1230	Meeting with President Hâmid Karzai
1430-1630	Meeting with key Government officials[a]
1630-1730	Meeting with the Chairman and staff of the Independent Election Commission
1830-2030	Reception hosted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General

Wednesday, 26 November

0730-0900	Travel from Kabul to Herat
0930-1030	Meeting with staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and United Nations agencies
1050-1145	Meeting with the Governor of Herat and other provincial officials
1200-1330	Lunch hosted by the Governor
1420-1450	Meeting with ISAF Regional Command/West and provincial reconstruction team (Italy)
1500-1630	Travel from Herat to Kabul

[a] The following ministers or high-level officials attended: Hedayat Amin Arsala (co-Chair of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board), Omar Zakhilwal (Minister of Transport), Jilani Popal (Director of Independent Directorate of Local Governance), Hanif Atmar (Minister of the Interior), Anwar Ul-Haq Ahady (Minister of Finance), Khodaidad Khodaidad (Minister of Counter-Narcotics), Jalil Shams (Minister of the Economy), Mohammad Ehsan Zia (Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development), Yasin Osmani (Head, High Office for Oversight), Mohammad Amin Farhang (Minister of Commerce and Industry), Amrullah Saleh (National Directorate for Security) and Asif Rahimi (Minister of Agriculture).

1830-1930	Meeting with European Union troika (Ambassadors of France and the Czech Republic, European Union Special Representative and the head of the European Commission delegation in Kabul) and the Commander of the European Union police mission
2000-2200	Dinner hosted by the Ambassador of Italy

Thursday, 27 November

0745-0840	Meeting with the United Nations country team
0900-1000	Meeting with the Secretary-General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer
1000-1200	Meeting with representatives of Afghan civil society
1200-1300	Meeting with the Speaker of the Meshrano Jirga, Sibghatullah Mojadeddi
1315-1430	Official lunch hosted by the Speaker of the Wolesi Jirga, Younus Qanooni, with members of parliament
1500-1545	Press conference
1700	Departure for Islamabad

United Nations S/2008/783

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 December 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 12 December 2008 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution 1830 (2008) of 7 August 2008, by which the Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) for a period of 12 months from the date of that resolution.

In that resolution, as in its previous resolutions extending the mandate of UNAMI, the Security Council recognized that the security of United Nations personnel is essential for UNAMI to be able to carry out its work for the benefit of the people of Iraq. Accordingly, it called upon the Government of Iraq and other Member States to continue to provide security and logistical support to the United Nations presence in Iraq.

As you are aware, the United Nations has continued to rely, inter alia, for this purpose upon the security and logistical support that has been provided by the multinational force in Iraq (MNF-I) pursuant to the authority granted to it by Security Council resolution 1546 (2004) of 8 June 2004 and subsequent relevant resolutions, including, most recently, resolution 1790 (2007) of 18 December 2007.

Detailed arrangements concerning the provision of that security support by the multinational force in Iraq are contained in the agreement concerning the establishment of security for UNAMI, which the United Nations concluded with the Government of the United States of America, as the lead MNF-I nation, on 8 December 2005.

In accordance with operative paragraph 1 of resolution 1790 (2007), the authorization for the multinational force in Iraq as set forth in resolution 1546 (2004) is due to expire on 31 December 2008. In view of the signing by the Governments of Iraq and of the United States of America on 17 November 2008 of the agreement on the withdrawal of United States forces from Iraq and the organization of their activities during their temporary presence in Iraq (the "Iraq-United States agreement"), it is my understanding that the authorization for the multinational force in Iraq as set forth in Security Council resolution 1546 (2004) will not be renewed.

Should that be the case, the agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the United States of America concerning the establishment of security for UNAMI will, pursuant to its terms, also terminate on 31 December 2008.

08-65770 (E) 171208

On 6 November 2008, I stated in my report to the Security Council (S/2008/688) that the United Nations continues to operate in a complex security environment in Iraq and it continues to be necessary that not only the Government of Iraq but also other Member States provide security and logistical support to the United Nations presence in Iraq. At the same time, as the Security Council has repeatedly recognized, the security of United Nations personnel continues to be essential for UNAMI, and indeed for the wider United Nations presence in Iraq, to be able to carry out its work.

In view of the conclusion of the Iraq-United States agreement, I understand that forces of the United States of America will remain in Iraq, with the consent of the Government of Iraq, beyond 31 December 2008. It is also my understanding that the Government of the United States, with the consent of the Government of Iraq, is willing to have those forces continue to provide security, as they have done until now, as well as logistical, support for the United Nations presence in Iraq.

In these circumstances, I intend to seek to negotiate and conclude with the Government of the United States of America an amended agreement setting out detailed arrangements concerning the continued provision by United States forces in Iraq of security support for the United Nations presence in Iraq, to replace the agreement of 8 December 2005.

At the same time, it would be my intention to keep the Government of Iraq fully informed of those negotiations and to take the necessary steps to ensure that any new agreement that the United Nations concludes with the Government of the United States fully respects the sovereignty of Iraq and is fully consistent with the terms on which the Government of Iraq has consented that the forces of the United States remain in Iraq beyond 31 December 2008.

I should be grateful if you could confirm that the Security Council is agreeable to this manner of proceeding. Upon receipt of such confirmation, I will proceed promptly to open such negotiations with the Government of the United States of America with a view to concluding the negotiations and signing the amended agreement by 31 December 2008.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

United Nations S/2008/784

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 December 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 16 December 2008 from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 12 December 2008 (S/2008/783) concerning the establishment of an integrated United Nations security structure for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. The Council welcomes the proposed arrangements set out in your letter.

(*Signed*) Neven **Jurica**
President of the Security Council

08-65764 (E) 171208